



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

SPECIAL MEETING

October 15, 2008

CASA LAS PALMAS, 323 E. CABRILLO BOULEVARD

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hochman called the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Chair Hochman, Michael Jordan, Lee Moldaver, Roger Schlueter, George Weber, Daniel Wilson

Committee members absent: None

Liaison members present: Park and Recreation Commissioner Beebe Longstreet

Liaison members absent: Councilmember Iya Falcone, Planning Commissioner John Jostes

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Jill Zachary, Creeks Supervisor George Johnson, Creeks Water Resources Specialist Autumn Malanca, Creeks Program Assistant Liz Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion:

Committee members Moldaver/Weber to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 10, 2008.

Vote:

Voice vote 3/0; Schlueter abstained.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to speak.

Mr. Wilson arrived at 5:35pm.

COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Benson reported that recruitment for the Committee is currently taking place, and that applications are due Monday, November 3.

Mr. Benson reported that storm sampling took place on Saturday, October 4, with .05" of rain. Laguna Creek, the Hope Drain, and Arroyo Burro were tested, and staff is awaiting results.

Mr. Benson reported that catch basin screens were installed on the Westside, and that within two days, trash and leaves had already piled up. Water Resources Specialist Tim Burgess took before and after photos to observe the amount of trash and debris kept from entering the storm drain, and later picked up by street sweeping.

Mr. Benson reported that the Laguna Creek fence at Yanonali Street is currently being installed, and is expected to be completed as early as next week. Mr. Benson noted that the fence is not impossible for people to get over, but that staff hopes it will cut down on human waste and litter entering the creek, and that the owners of the neighboring property are pleased with the quality and results, and feel it will be effective.

Mr. Benson noted that the November and December meetings will take place at Council Chambers, on the second floor of City Hall, at 735 Anacapa Street.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

BUSINESS ITEMS

9a. Creeks Division Role in Development Review

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a presentation on the Creeks Division's role in the City's land development review process.

Documents:

Staff Report – October 2008

Speakers:

Autumn Malanca, Creeks Water Resources Specialist

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Jordan arrived at 5:46pm.

Committee members asked questions regarding project conditions that require Creeks review; and, suggested that the permeability of a site trigger Creeks review.

Ms. Malanca reported that Planning staff have a list of the type of projects that Creeks staff wants to review, but that she has been reviewing more projects as the City implements the Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) requirements.

Committee members asked questions regarding projects pumping water to the storm drain system; and, suggested that the term “drainage” be added to the setback triggers, as the definition of a creek can be limiting.

Mr. Benson reported that some projects have to dewater their sites to allow for underground parking or foundation work, and rather than paying to send the water to the sewer for treatment, they request permission to pump water to storm drains.

Committee members asked questions regarding why Planning and Public Works will be responsible for reviewing creek-related issues and not Water Resources; and, whether Planning has allocated additional staff time and resources to ensure they can take over review of the projects.

Ms. Malanca reported that Water Resources and Planning are both Divisions of the Public Works Department, and that Water Resources is brought in only if there is a special issue.

Mr. Benson reported that it is the entire City’s responsibility to implement the SWMP. Therefore, while Ms. Malanca has been administrating the SWMP, various development review divisions will have to absorb the additional costs of implementation.

Committee members asked whether Planning has the knowledge required to review creek-related issues; whether projects will need to improve existing runoff; and, why there is not a specific trigger for a project’s proximity to a creek restoration project.

Ms. Malanca reported that Planning staff knowledge is improving as awareness of the SWMP requirements increases; that small projects are not required to improve on the volume of runoff; and, that proximity to a creek restoration project was left vague so that it would be flexible and up to the discretion of Creeks staff.

Mr. Schlueter suggested that because the Technical Guidance Manual will be a living document, any time it is updated will be a natural time to provide additional training to Planning staff.

9b. Fiscal Years 2010 – 2015 Proposed Capital Program

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a presentation on the proposed Creeks Division Capital Program for FY 10 – FY 15 and provide feedback on the approach and funding allocations. The Committee will have the opportunity to make recommendations to City Council on the proposed capital program in February 2009.

Documents:

Staff Report – October 2008

Speakers:

Cameron Benson, Creeks Division Manager

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Mr. Benson noted two mistakes in the Staff Report regarding the Santa Barbara Golf Club Storm Water Management Project: the plans are expected to be completed in December 2008; and, the project will be funded during Fiscal Year 2009, and will not be included in the FY 10 – FY 15 capital budget.

Committee members asked questions regarding fish passage projects being funded by Measure B; the availability of grant funding given the current economy; whether there are projects that Creeks has abandoned;

Mr. Benson noted that the fish passage projects are almost entirely grant funded, and that there is additional grant funding available for restoration projects with a Steelhead component; while the future of some grant funding is uncertain, staff has been active in researching and monitoring bond measures that have already passed; that there are projects proposed in the Creek Inventory and Assessment Study (2000) that are not being proposed for implementation at this time, and that timing and staff resources were considered in the review process.

Committee members asked questions regarding operational maintenance versus capital replacement; why staff proposed moving the Technical Assistance Program from the capital budget to the operating budget; whether staff time is billed to particular projects; and, whether a reserve balance estimated to pay for 2 large projects will be enough in the future should a great project opportunity arise.

Mr. Benson reported that by placing funds in the capital budget for replacement parts and equipment, the unspent funds accrue each year, while operational funds left unspent go to reserves at year end; and, that the Technical Assistance Program was initially placed in the capital budget

because it was not yet an ongoing program, and by moving it to the operating budget it allows for easy evaluation and adjustment with each year's budget.

Ms. Zachary reported that staff has considered billing time to Capital projects, but decided that it would be significant additional bookkeeping with little additional benefit.

Mr. Johnson noted that even if the reserve balance fell to \$3 million, when a project opportunity arises, it takes one to two years to plan and permit the project, allowing time to direct new funds to the capital program.

Ms. Longstreet noted that while staff should not be irresponsible with funds, the reserve balance shouldn't be so large that it's not actively working on projects.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Committee Members Schlueter/Wilson to adjourn.

Chair Hochman adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Benson
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager